

Appl. No. 09/281,710
Amdt dated July 12, 2003
Reply to Office Action of February 12, 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 4-18 are presently active in this case; Claims 1 and 11 having been amended by way of the present amendment. Claims 2 and 3 were previously canceled.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 4, 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,910,962 to Pan et al.; and Claims 5-10 and 13-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pan et al.

First, Applicants wish to thank Examiner Jackson and Supervisory Patent Examiner (SPE) Ip for the June 17, 2003, personal interview at which time the outstanding issues in this case were discussed. During the discussion, Applicants presented amendments and arguments substantially as indicated in this response. While no formal agreement was reached, Examiner Jackson and SPE Ip indicated that Pan et al. fails to teach an external cavity formed "by" the laser and the fiber grating, and that Pan et al. also fails to teach the intercepting means required by the claims.

Turning now to the merits, in order to expedite issuance of a patent in this case, Applicants have amended independent Claims 1 and 11 to clarify the patentable features of the present invention over the cited reference to Pan et al. Specifically, Claims 1 and 11 have been amended to recite that a cavity is formed by the laser light emitting device and a grating, and that the cavity resonates the light between the reflective surface of the laser light emitting device and the grating, thereby oscillating a laser beam having a given oscillation wavelength.

As discussed in the June 17, 2003, interview, Pan et al. discloses a multi wavelength fiber laser source having a pump laser 14 that oscillates at 980 nm to provide an input to an external fiber laser 10 that oscillates at 1550 nm in response to excitation from the 980 nm pump laser. Thus, Pan et al. discloses a multi cavity laser system and does not disclose an external cavity formed by a laser and a grating as recited in Applicants' independent Claims 1 and 11. Pan et al. states that the light from the laser 33A is directed by the WDM coupler 38 back toward the Erbium-doped section 37 to increase the gain for the message laser signals passing through the section 37. This is shown in col. 4, lines 57-60 of Pan et al.

The WDM coupler is used as a wavelength multiplexer; a coupler is used as an optical function device. For example, it is used for wavelength multiplexer, wavelength demultiplexer, and polarization multiplexer. In contrast, the connector of the present invention is used for simply and easily connecting. For example, when measuring the noise characteristic of the external cavity laser, the connector is used in order to connect the external cavity laser easily with the noise measurement system. From the technical point of view, there is the difference between the connector and the coupler. Pan et al. simply fails to teach or suggest a connector as claimed in Claims 1 and 11.

Therefore, Claims 1 and 11 patentably define over the cited reference to Pan et al. Moreover, as Claims 4-10 and 12-18 depend from Claims 1 and 11, respectively, these claims also patentably define over the cited references.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in

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condition for formal Allowance. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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